

Today is National Ride Your Bike to Work Day, where commuters across the nation -- from the 3rd District of Oregon to the nation's capital -- will be encouraging people to drop their car keys and pick up a helmet.

At a time when oil from the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster is gushing into the Gulf, I can't help but think of the steps -- big and small -- that each of us can take for a healthier, more prosperous planet.

This means passing an energy and climate bill, which I hope the Senate does sooner rather than later, and giving people more and better transportation choices.

For the past fourteen years in Washington, because I've biked rather than driven, I've used virtually no gas, caused no wear and tear to the roads, and released little to no pollution. While I was among the lone cyclists on Capitol Hill when I arrived, the Congressional Bike Caucus that I co-chair is now 223 bike-partisan members strong.

Biking and walking are cost-effective solutions to some of the biggest challenges we face. Modest investments can reduce traffic congestion and slash emissions that pose serious threats to people's health and the planet.

It's amazing to see how leaders at the national and local levels have embraced this issue, from Mayor Fenty to Secretary LaHood.

Today, I will bike with other cyclists (including DC's Mayor Fenty) down the first-ever Pennsylvania Avenue bike lane. Yes, America's best known main street finally has bike lanes, a challenge I made at last year's Bike Summit.

Last night, 23 bipartisan members of Congress - myself included - delivered [a letter to Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood](#), thanking him for recognizing biking and walking as important components of our transportation system that deserve dedicated funding.

Some of the changes happening at the local and national level are inspiring! These steps are making large cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC as well as smaller

communities across the country - better, more livable places to live. As I cruise down America's most famous street with its new bike lanes tomorrow morning, it will be exciting to think that thousands of other Ride Your Bike to Work participants across the country are part of this growing movement. Even more exciting is to think about what lies ahead.